



April 2, 2003

Dear Member,

Many important events have transpired since we sent published the last online edition of our newsletter, Unmarried America – some good news and some unfortunate.

The need for our organization has been reinforced by all of the media and political attention to marriage. First, there is the president's 5 billion dollar proposal to promote marriage. Then there is the Massachusetts Supreme Court decision to legalize gay marriage in that state. Plus the proposed federal constitutional amendment to prohibit gay marriage as well as benefits to unmarried couples and unmarried families. Fortunately, we have been vocal and visible in giving some counter balance to this frenzy over marriage. More than 86 million unmarried Americans deserve equal rights too!

Many responsible journalists and producers have come to us to solicit our views and to learn more about the needs and concerns of people who choose not to marry or who are not ready to marry or who can not marry for economic or legal reasons. We call attention to the unfairness of marital status discrimination. We question why unmarried workers should receive less pay at work in terms of benefits compensation. We challenge the current tax system which so often disadvantages unmarried taxpayers. We complain about consumer discounts given to married couples but not to roommates and domestic partners. We challenge the assumptions underlying higher auto insurance rates for unmarried drivers.

As you can see from the enclosed news stories, we have been able to share our views with millions of readers of national and local newspapers and magazines. We have also appeared in the past few months on many radio talk shows and news broadcasts, as well as two appearances on CNN.

So that's the good news. Unmarried America exists and we are able to speak to the nation through the media. We are also able to educate corporate executives through human resource publications and through business magazines (we were quoted in BusinessWeek online a few weeks ago) and newspapers (we were mentioned in the Wall Street Journal last week).

The unfortunate news is that our economic survival has been seriously challenged. Unmarried America is still in its infancy. The baby has been thrown into the lake and been told "sink or swim."

Lloyd E. Rigler, the founding benefactor of the American Association for Single People, died on December 7, 2003. The people who have taken charge of his foundation have informed us that they are not interested in giving any further grants to support equal rights but will limit their funding to arts organizations. Since funding from the Rigler Foundation was our primary source of support, we are now operating on slim reserves. As we develop plans to find other sources of major funding, we must rely on our membership base for our interim survival. Please read the special fund-raising appeal for more detailed information.

The hardest work has been done. We have developed an agenda, a national reputation, credibility with the media, a comprehensive website and archives, and a core base of members. We need you – our members – to come to our aid with larger contributions, to give gift memberships to others, and to get two or three of your friends or family members to join us. We need your help and we need it now.

Thomas F. Coleman
Executive Director